

CAPT COOPER

~~SECRET~~

TRANSCRIPT OF A SUNSTRAND, MODEL B
COCKPIT VOICE RECORDER, SERIAL NO. 256
REMOVED FROM ZK-NZP
(FLIGHT TE 901) WHICH WAS INVOLVED
IN AN ACCIDENT AT ROSS ISLAND ON
28 NOVEMBER 1979
THE TIME IS GMT

Note : Air - Ground communications are co-ordinated with and supplemented by ground based recordings.

LEGEND

- CAM Cockpit area microphone voice or sound source
- RDO Radio transmission from:-
 - 1 Voice identified as Captain
 - 2 Voice identified as First Officer
 - 3 Voice identified as Flight Engineer (Brooks)
 - 4 Voice identified as Flight Engineer (Malone)
 - 5 Voice identified as P. Mulgrew
 - ? Unidentified voice
- CTR McMurdo Centre / Ice Tower
- * Unintelligible word
- % Background conversation not pertinent to the operation of the flight
- () Questionable text
- (()) Editorial insertion
- - - Pause
- @ Ground Proximity Warning System
- (HF/VHF) Type of Transmission

0024.1171
0027.05

- 1. WASSIL
- 3. Brooks
- 4. Muloney
- 5. Mulgrew
- WYLE
- COSSIE
- Furner
- Burgess

(COMMUNICATION)

(COCKPIT CONVERSATION)

0017: * * * * *
Hey you don't want any landing data * *

0017: No

0017: You've just got your --- altimeters to set through transition --- OK

0017: I think we'll ah --- we'll start down a little early here ah

30:54 OK

? OK

-2 I'll see if I can get hold of them on VHF

? Yes

31:40 How far away are we (from McMurdo)

? About a hundred and ah forty miles

-1 Clouds come down a bit * * * * *
may not be able to * * McMurdo
Very hard to tell the difference between the cloud and the ice * *

32:16 % *
* * better conditions ** before

(Comms)

Get it?

Operation Skit 3007.1 6 & W 11/30/87

33:13 ? That'll be round about Cape (Bird 0019
 Byrd) wouldn't it?
 ? Right Right
 -4 Göt a low overcast over McMurdo
 33:30 -1 Doesn't look very promising does it? 0019
 -2 NO
 -4 NO
 -2 * * * *
 34:07 -1 * that's what we want * * * 20:1
 ? * * going down
 34:10 * * forty miles * * 0020
 -1 Yes

g

RAD-2
 Ah roger we're approximately
 one one four
 CTR Kiwi niner zero one confirm
 0018 one hundred and ninety four one
 niner four
 0023 RAD-1 Negative one one four one
 hundred and fourteen
 Gents we're going initially to eighteen
 thousand and ah the cloud cover in
 the McMurdo area ah has increased
 although the visibility is ah forty
 kilometers so ah ground visibility
 is good and ah we --- will be taking
 advantage of ah the radar facilities at
 McMurdo for letdown which ah should
 take us below the cloud and ah give us
 a view of the McMurdo area ah that is always
 likely to change of course depending

0035 CTR Kiwi nine zero one attempt
contact one two six decimal
two

on any variations in the
weather but ah we're hopeful we'll
be able to ah give you a look at
McMurdó today. Thank you.

0041 RAD-2 Ah roger nine zero on

0054 RAD-2 Mac Center New Zealand nine
zero one on one two six two.
Do you read

-3 We're going below cloud letting
down below cloud

((comment to unknown person))

-2 I'll try another receiver

Mac Centre New Zealand nine zero one
on one two six two do read?

%

Ah look whats the weight here ---
one

0022

-3 A hundred and ninety-nine --- and a
half

%

We'll have a minimum of two sixty

0023

O.K. --- beauty

-2 It's actually two fifty two for
one point five

0023

? Uh Uh

Those winds we had on the way down are they worth an update for the return fuel at all

-3

No ---

You see the * of return fuel is based on the depressurized which is at ten thousand feet

Yeah

0023:

0309

-3

We've got ninety miles to go but ah

0319

?

0023:

03:13

CTR Kiwi niner zero correction kiwi niner zero one nine zero one Mac Centre how do you read

%

Did he call hine zero one then or ---

-3

0333

0023:

RAD-2 Mac Centre New Zealand nine zero 23:10 one on eight nine nine seven

No reply on one two six two

%

CTR New Zealand nine zero one roger 03:42 do you have a good lock on our tacan channell twenty-two nine two niner over

RAD-2 Ah negative at this point ah confirm
03:51 the frequency one zero niner point two

CTR Roger our tacan channel is two two miner
04:03

RAD-2 Roger New Zealand nine zero one -3
04:10 standby

CTR Kiwi nine zero one contact tower ?-3
04:16 at one three four decimal one

RAD-2 Understand one three four decimal
04:24 four

CTR That's one three four decimal one
04:28

RAD-2 Roger --
04:33 One three four decimal one ?

RAD-2 Mac Tower this is New Zealand nine
05:01 zero one on one three four
decimal one do you read?

-1

RAD-2 Mac Tower this is New Zealand nine
07:01 zero one on one three four decimal
one do you read

Have you got the radio information
--- radio

--- radio ah * * get yourself the
tacan frequency

%

((Soud of altitude alert))

Naw-track alt cap

%

*

%

* * on the radio license

Do you want to try the tower?

07-30
0024:

04-3'
0024

RAD-2 Mac Centre this is New Zealand nine
07:21 zero one on -2

RAD-2 Mac Tower New Zealand nine zero
05:30 one on one three four. one do you
read?

0547 -1

0025:

Try them again on one two six
two

8

RAD-2 Mac Centre this is New Zealand nine
05:50 zero one on one two six two do you
read

?

* * * * *

Yeh well I had a yellow * on this

8

Eight nine there's no reply on one
three four one -1

Nothing at all

8

CTR New Zealand niner zero one roger 0738 ((Laughter)
07:28 Mac Ice Tower is getting contact on
both one three four decimal one and one
two six decimal two

0027

RAD-1 Ah McMurdo Tower New Zealand nine zero
07:40 one on one three four decimal one do
you read?

8

0840 -2 You didn't get the tower did you?

0028:

Mac --- Mac

-1

CTR Air New Zealand niner zero one Mac
08:59 Centre do you have uniform hotel
foxtrot frequencies

-1 No --- no we haven't got it

RAD-2 Negative ah New Zealand nine zero
09:07 one

CTR Ah roger ah standby. Ice Tower is
09:11 trying to contact you both ah one twenty
six two and one three four point one

RAD-2 Ah roger thanks
09:20

? Go lower * * * * depressurized

0935 -1 I'll just give him a call on one
two six two

0029

RAD-1 Ah McMurdo New Zealand nine zero
09:41 one one two six two do you read?

-4

Ah * * * *

RAD-1 Ah McMurdo nine zero one on one
10:09 two six two do you read

%

1027 -1 Can you hear him there at all?

0030

-2 No

-4

RAD-1 Ah Mac New Zealand ah --- nine zero
10:32 one on one three four decimal one
zero do read

No

%

1059

-1

I'll have to do an orbit here I think

0031

Sam? ?

You what?

%

1108

-1

Well actually its clear out here if we get down --- and

0031

?

Its not clear on the right hand side here

-2

No

1118

-1

Ah if you can get HF contact tell him that ah you know --- we'd like a further descent we have contact with the ground and ah you know we could if necessary descend ah doing an orbit

0031

-2

OK

RAO-2 Mac Center New Zealand nine zero one
11:38

%

CTR New Zealand nine zero one Centre go
11:42 ahead

RDO-2 Ah roger New Zealand nine zero one
11:47 still nothing on one two six
Two or one three four decimal one

We'd like further descent we could
orbit in our present position which
is approximately fourty three miles
12:02 north ah descending VMC

CTR Ah roger er ah New Zealand nine zero
12:03 one VMC descent is approved and keep
Mac Centre advised of your altitude

RDO-2 Roger New Zealand nine zero one we're
12:11 vacating one eight zewo we'll -1
advise level

0032:
I'll come round there and ah
--- set that down (at) ten thousand

OK

-2

%

They give us ten thousand?

1235

?

No clearance

?

Gotta keep them advised

-2

No * see if we can descend VMC

-3

0032:
I'll do an orbit here to get down I
think --- and keep them advised of our
altitude

1247

-1

0033:
I see alt heading select vert speed

1304

2

%

1324

-3

We are descending below cloud now so better photographs soon

0033

?

Ah ah

-1

Actually its clear ahead there

?

Ah ah

-3

We're going down below cloud

-1

No I can't ah

-4

Skipper

-1

I'd better come round (here) (again)

-4

Are we (continuing) to ten thousand at (this speed)

-3

We are going down and then we'll go to McMurdo below the cloud

-1

Three thirty five eight two yeah well I won't be doing eight two

-4

Right

-1

Just one point five --- one point five speed --- ah I see yeah OK

1354

-4

That's if you want to go past
* *

0033

0034:2

1426 PAI

Captain again ladies and gentleman we're carrying out an orbit and ah circling our present position and ah will be descending to an altitude below cloud so that that we can proceed to McMurdo Sound --- thank you

0034:

1447

Actually I had IAS hold there

§

0035:

1521 -2

Transponder is now responding

-1

OK

-4

Still no good on that frequency though?

1526

-2

No

RDO-2 Mac Tower this is New Zealand
15:33 nine zero one on one three four decimal one do you read

CTR Air New Zealand nine zero one your're
15:39 loud and clear

§

RDÖ-2 Ah roger nine zero one you are now loud
15:42 and clear also we are presently descending through flight level one three zero VMC and ah --- the intention at the moment is to descend to one zero thousand

CTR Roger understand --- (break) one zero
16:00 thousand VMC requesting a radar letdown
below this cloud

((Sound of altitude alert))

1601
0053:

RDO-2 That is affirmative nine zero one
1607

((Sound of Altitude alert))

1626
0036:

-1 Are we cleared below one one
thousand

1628
0036:

-2 No --- no I told him we were going
down to ten

-1 Oh I see alright

0036:
16:3:

So ah

We've lost him again

0036
16:4

Ten thousand armed I see

1642

RDO-2 New Zealand nine zero one do you
16:46 read?

((Sound of altitude alert))

0036
1657

-1 Ah --- well no the cloud base is low and 0037:0

%

ah

BREAK IN TAPE
1719-1723

%

-4 You're ah through ten thousand are
you going to hold it here

1730
0037:2

-1 Yep

RDO-2 Mac Tower New Zealand nine zero one.
17:40 We seem to have lost contact again we're
level at ten thousand feet in the ah (VMC)

-2 I'll go back to HF Jim

1759
0037:7

%

-1 Ok

1807 Well --- ah we're having trouble
with communications right now so ah if
you'll just wait there and see what
we come up with

0037:1
(Comm
to pe
unkno

%

-1 Try him on No. 2

0038:

RDO-2 Mac Tower New Zealand nine zero one
18:22 how do you read now one three four
one

Give him another call on ah ---
I've got to stay VMC here so I'll be
doing another orbit

-1

RDO-2 Mac Centre this is New Zealand nine
18:46 zero one on eight nine

CTR ((Centre reply unintelligible on this
tape))

RDO-2 Roger nine zero one we briefly had
18:54 contact on one three four one we've now
lost contact we're maintaining ten
thousand feet presently thirty four miles
to the north of McMurdo

CTR Nine zero one you lost comm with the
19:03 tower say again your altitude

CTR Roger we're maintaining one zero thousand
19:24 - ten thousand

CTR OK roger and ah keep trying the tower on
19:33 two six decimal two and one three four point
one they heard you here sir

RDO-2 Roger dee
19:42

RDO-2 Mac Tower New Zealand Nine zero one on one
19:50 two six two do you read?

2007

-3

* * having a bit of trouble with
radio contact at the moment

0039:

Have you got the squelch off?

** * clearance to go down * * *

Say again

Have you got the squelch off on that?

Yes --- on both

0039:

2016

RDO-2 Mac Tower New Zealand nine zero one
20:23 on one three four one do you read?

Try putting number two on that
frequency

Ah shit

Lost contact when we got down a bit
lower

2047
0040:

RDO-2 Mac Tower New Zealand nine zero one on
21:02 one three four decimal one do you
read?

Um ---

Wonder if they can get us on one
two one five then?

2115
0040

Right --- shall I try it on one two
one five?

2134
0041

RDO-2 Ah McMurdo New Zealand nine zero one on one
21:44 two one five do you read?

2153
0041:34

Well look go back to HF

-1

Yep

-2

Tell him we can make a visual descent, descending to the ah

-1

My god

?

On a grid of one eight zero

-1

Yep

-2

And ah make a visual approach to McMurdo

-1

Ok

-2

RDO-2 Ah Mac Centre New Zealand
22:15

22:18 ((Voice recorder test signal interruption))

CTR Zero one Mac Centre go ahead

RDO-2 Roger nine zero one still negative contact
22:23 on VHF we are VMC and ah we'd like to let
down on a grid of one eight zero and proceed
visually to McMurdo

CTR New Zealand niner zero one maintain VMC
22:37 keep us advised of your altitude as you
approach McMurdo over

RDO-2 Ah roger nine zero one we will maintain
22:46 VMC

2200
0041:40
0041:45
2205

0042:27
2249

0042:31
2253

-1 Well we're gonna go in VMC
and then come back in

-2 Turn at two thousand * * * * *

CTR New Zealand niner zero one Mac Centre report
22:56 ten DME from MCMurdo

RDO-2 Ah roger nine zero one to report ten DME
23:01 MCMurdo

2307
0042:40

-2 Two thousand feet is armed

-1 Right

? * hold * hold

-1 We're VMC around this way

-3 You can get in here now

-5 Can I get out a mike there?

-4 Yeah you can get a mike there

2318
0042:50

-1 Sorry I haven't got time to talk but
Ah

-5 Ah we can't talk if you can't see

* -1 The ah --- both the VHF channels that
they use here we're not picking them up
at fifty miles erh

0043:00
2324

0042:41
2310

* * * put this on ** sidetone
(conversation pertinent to installing
commentators in seat)

0043:20
2342

* * Do you want to swap around while
he's (commentating)?

-3

Commentating? Yep

-4

%

There you go there's some land ahead

2349
0043:2

Ah

?

* * North of McMurdo

?

I'll arm the nav again

2357
0043:3

-1

OK

-2

Alt nav cap IAS hold

-1

0043:3
2400

I'll go back to one two six two eh
Jim?

-2

0043:5
2413

OK

-1

%

Keeps you busy on comm ((doesn't it))?

-1

2429
0044:

Well you know ah its a bit of a
nuisance

-2

-3 Are we (about) here now?
up to
(Sound of rustling paper)

CTR New Zealand nine zero one Mac Centre
25:00 if possible give us a tops report on the ah
cloud layers

-1 Ah OK at ah fifty miles north it was
ten thousand 2508
0044:

-2 OK

RAD-2 Ah roger New Zealand nine zero one fifty
25:11 miles north the base was one zero
thousand ten thousand

CTR Understand base is at ten thousand
25:21

RAD-2 Affirmative we are now at six thousand
25:24 ah descending to two thousand and ah
we are VMC

CTR Nine zero one Roger
25:32

((Ratcheting sound similar to heading
knob reselection)) 2532
0045

-3 Ah year * five thousand feet
2543
0045

? Roger

-3 We're going down to two

2552
0045:

-1 Ah we had a --- message from ah the
Wright Valley and they are clear
over there

-5 Oh good

-1 So if you can get us over tha way

-5 No trouble

-1 Right

-5 Taylor on the right now

-? Oh yeah

%

? Can we have a swap round now please

2608
0045:

%

-2 I see vert speed

2624

%

PA

-5

This is Peter Mulgrew again folks. I
still can't see very much at the
moment. Keep you informed soon as I
see something that gives me a clue as to
where we are. I'll let you know. Is
that coming over

2626

? Yep

0046:
2639

0046:				
2641				
	-1	Two nine --- Two nine three oh --- right.		
	-2	Yep		
2646	-5	We're going down in altitude now and it won't be long before we get quite a good **	PA	
0046:	-2	A thousand to go		2648
	-1	OK		
0046:		Alt Nav track		2651
	-2	Vert speed		
	-1	Speed		
0046:	-2	Speed I see		2656
		((Sound of altitude alert))		
2702	-3	Where's Erebus in relation to us at the moment		
0046:	?	Left (about four or five miles) about eleven o'clock		2706
	?	Yep		
		((Sound of paper rustling))		
	?	Left do you reckon		0046

?	Well no -- I think	0046:4
?	I've been looking for it	2715
-?	I think it'll be erh	0046:4
-3	I'm just thinking of any high ground in the area that's all	
-5	I think it'll be left yeah	
-4	Yeah I reckon about here	
-5	Yes --- no no I don't really know	0047:1
-5	That's the edge	2730
?	* Two thousand feet	2734
-1	Yep	0047:1
-2	Yep	
-3	Yeah I just	
-2	IAS hold	0047:1
-3	didn't want to block the window too completely with it	2745
(?)	Oh yeah	
-1	You've got speed set up there anyway haven't you	2749
		0047:1

0047:1
2752

Alt cap

-4

2757
0047:2

Speed, nav track alt --- hold

-1

§

2812
0047:1

We might have to (drop) down to fifteen hundred here I think

-1

Yeah ok

-2

Probably see further in anyway

-2

2816
0047:1

((Sound of Altitude Alert))

2818
0047:1

Not too bad

-2

?

I see vert speed for fifteen hundred feet

2825
0047:1

*** it's not right

-4

?

Yeah bloody oath

-4

0047:1
2829

(Spending a very long while on bloody instruments at this (time/height) are you^{erh}

0048:
2835

Alt cap

-3

Ross Island there

-5

2840

a bit thick as Beat(?)

-?	Alt hold	2842
-4	Yeh yeh	0048:
-5	Erebus should be here	00048
-2	Terrain	2851
	Fifteen hundred	0048:
	((Overlapping Conversation))	
?	Capture	2854
-2	Alt hold	0048:
-3	hold on both nav track	2855
-1	Ah we didn't ah get that ah Tacan frequency did we?	2901
-2	No	0048:
-3	(Have) we got the (aired) * on the aircraft?	2908
?	Wasn't the frequency one oh nine two	0048:
-2	Well we think that's what it is but channel twenty nine	11
-1	Actually those conditions don't look very good at all	0048
		18
		0048

-5	No they don't	2922 0048:
-5	You're down at one one four now are you?	0048: 2923
-1	Fifteen hundred	2927 0048:
-2	What's um --- have we got them on the tower	2931 0048:
-4	No --- I'll try again	2932 0049:
-1	(Only got them on HF that's all)	2936 0049:
-2	Try em again	
-5	OK	
	Looks like the edge of Ross Island there	2939 0049:

RAD-2 Mac Tower ah this is New Zealand
 2940 nine zero one on one three four
 .. 49:00 one do you read?

-?	Ah	
?	* * * *	
-3	I don't like this	2954 0049
	4914	

4915	-1	Have you got anything from him?	2955 0049:
	-2	No	
4919	-1	We're twenty six miles north we'll have to climb out of this	3000 0049:
	?	OK	
4922	-2	It's clear on on the right	3003 0049:
	-1	Is it?	
	-2	Yep.	
4924	?	You can see (Ross Island)	3005 0049:
	-2	Your're clear to turn right there's	3008 0049
	-1	No negative	
	-2	No high ground if you do a one eighty	
3014	4933	((Ground proximately warning tone))	0049 3014
		Whoop Whoop	
		* Pull up	*
		Whoop Whoop	
	-3	Five hundred feet	3014

Pull up
Four hundred feet
Whoop Whoop
Pull up
Pull up
Whoop Whoop
((Reduced volume))
Pull up
Go round power please
Whoop Whoop
Pull --
(End of Recording)

-3

?

-1

3021 4937